

FRESH NOTES

A TECHNICAL UPDATE PUBLISHED BY HORTGRO SCIENCE

Revocation of the tolerance and deregistration of chlorpyrifos in South Africa

It came to our attention via a CropLife SA communication that the Department of Health along with the Registrar (Act 36 of 1947), is in the process of the revocation of the registrations on all crops to comply with relevant international standards set for hazardous crop protection compounds.

Chlorpyrifos is an extremely important compound in the arsenal of agricultural remedies on fruit crops, especially for the control of several important pests such as, various mealy bug species and scale insects, with some classified as quarantine pests by our international trading partners.

The Good Agricultural Practice designed for the use of chlorpyrifos (dormant applications) fits very well into integrated crop protection strategies, resulting in the product being a preferred compound in the control of mealy bug and other sucking insects. This use pattern also ensures zero residues at harvest on all our deciduous fruit crops.

Given the above, Hortgro requested further engagement and information on this matter and a letter was sent to the Registrar: Act No. 36 of 1947, relating to the proposed revocation of the tolerance and deregistration of chlorpyrifos in South Africa, also highlighting dramatic changes in the availability and use of strategically important crop protection compounds.

Hortgro indicated that while it's understood that this action is largely driven by international requirements and based on sound scientific facts, what was most concerning is the timeline for these revocations and phase-out of chlorpyrifos products for agricultural use in South Africa (since this would no longer allow for the critical dormant application use pattern on all our deciduous fruit crops).

With the Registrar acknowledging receipt of the Hortgro communication letter but not providing further related details, a CropLife SA communication: Chlorpyrifos Update was received, confirming the following:

Following the CropLife SA – Act No. 36 of 1947 liaison meeting held 23 November 2021, CropLife SA wrote to the Registrar (Act No. 36 of 1947) requesting more clarity on his plans for the revocation of South Africa registrations for products containing chlorpyrifos (also reminding that the industry was previously informed that the Department of Health was planning to revoke all published MRLs for the active ingredient and that local registrations would be revoked thereafter).

CropLife SA received a reply from the Registrar (Act No. 36 of 1947) and the key message is that:

- The phase-out period of chlorpyrifos-containing products starts in December 2021 and runs for 2 years.
- All sales of chlorpyrifos-containing products will have to cease on 31 March 2023.
- Extrapolating from the fact that the phase-out period runs for 2 years, all use of chlorpyrifos-containing products on farm will have to cease 31 December 2023.

Should the CropLife SA Team obtain more information, it will be circulated to members and other industry partners.

Suitable alternatives are being investigated.

EU mancozeb developments

Following the EU decision to withdraw all authorizations of mancozeb in the EU, the non-renewal regulation was published in December 2020, with a related phase-out period regarding use in the EU. Following EU non-renewal of approval of an active substance, a separate process follows to review the relevant EU MRLs. In the case of mancozeb, the group of dithiocarbamates needs to be reviewed as a whole, with the process underway and ongoing within the EU and being closely monitored by Hortgro (with a proposed reduced EU MRL for mancozeb likely not to affect the 2022-23 season).